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and we find inferior authors availing themselves rapidly of the authority of his example. Indeed we fear, that it will soon be as discreditable for a great novelist to frame a good story, as it was a few years ago for a great man to write a good hand. We forbear to notice any of our author's minor faults, but cannot help remarking on the letters of Doña Martha, as singularly unfortunate specimens of epistolary composition.

His principal and only very striking merit, is his talent for description. This alone is, however, sufficient to redeem his greatest faults, and to entitle his work to a thorough perusal. We recollect no author, except Irving, who has painted American scenery with equal power. The descriptions of the Ohio and Mississippi, of the valley of the Commanches, and many other passages of the same kind, are such as would do honor to any author. It was a well known practice of many of the greatest masters of landscape painting, to confine themselves to the representation of inanimate nature, and to procure other artists to draw such figures, as might be necessary to complete their pictures. We should think that our author might derive a useful hint from this practice, did we not believe, that his defects in the construction of his story and the delineation of his characters were those of negligence, and that a writer, who has shown such talents in one branch of his art, and that a very important one, could scarcely fail of success in others, if willing to seek it by proper exertion.



2.—*The Appeal for suffering Genius, a Poetical Address for the Benefit of the Boston Bard; and the Triumph of Truth, a Poem.* By DANIEL BRYAN. Svo. pp. 80. Washington. Way & Gideon.

To the poetical parts of this volume, the author has attached a Preface of considerable length, in which he explains his purpose, and a large part of which is taken up in apologizing for 'his juvenile effusions' published some years ago under the title of the 'Mountain Muse, or the Adventures of Daniel Boone.' That work, 'the wild offspring of a rude undisciplined fancy,' his maturer judgment tells him contains imperfections, and he thinks some persons have formed a false estimate of his powers as a poet, from an ignorance of the circumstances under which his early genius expanded itself.

Mr Bryan is moreover apprehensive, that certain readers and editors, into whose hands the 'Mountain Muse' happened to fall,

have suffered the films of prejudice so far to gather around their vision, as not to be able to see clearly the merits of his later productions. Of this he gives some strong instances in point. How far the author's impressions are in reality well founded we know not, but he is certainly right in his position, that the aberrations of a youthful muse ought not to stamp a man's fame forever, in defiance of the vigorous and mature efforts of manhood. Among the great names at the head of English poetry, he cites those of Shakspeare, Pope, Byron, and justly asks with what propriety their merits would be decided by their first productions. These it would be idle to call up at the present day; they are forgotten. And so in other cases, like that of our poet, for instance, a generous criticism would throw a veil over the imperfections of youth, and rejoice that better fruits have sprung from maturity of years; or, to express the same thought in the poetical numbers of the author,

'Shall golden ore be spurned because it came
From mines whence baser metals once were drawn?
Shall eyes reject the sun's unclouded flame,
Because dark mists obscured its struggling dawn?'

No, we say, not so; grasp the gold where you can find it, and enjoy the light when it comes. We agree, therefore, with Mr Bryan, that if any one, whether through prejudice or perverseness, has passed judgment on his later works, merely from an opinion derived from a perusal of the '*Mountain Muse*,' written fourteen years ago, he has done essential injustice to the author.

The present volume contains two poems; the first is an '*Appeal in Behalf of the Boston Bard*,' with the benevolent design of exciting the sympathy of the public for '*suffering genius*;' the second is called '*The Triumph of Truth*,' and was occasioned by the establishment of the censorship over the press in France. The '*Appeal*' touches on several topics calculated to kindle a strong interest in the case of the suffering bard, and the deep sensibility and kind feelings of the author blend themselves closely with his poetical imagery, and give a melancholy tone to the utterings of his muse. It is rather as a poet of feeling, than of high descriptive powers, that we should characterize our author. He is patriotic, too, as will be seen by the following extract.

'But England's bards are blessed with patrons now,
And freedom blushes while the Muse proclaims,
That sons of genius from Columbia's shore,
Beneath Britannia's fostering kindness, find
The favor, which they vainly seek at home.
Our Wests, our Allstons, and our Leslies, there,
And there our Newtons, and our Bowmans, too,

The enlivening sunshine of her smiles enjoy ;
 Their pencils catch the kindling glow of hope,
 And on the canvass life and beauty start
 At their creating touch. Columbians, rouse !
 Your mental bondage burst ; be free in thought ;
 In taste and judgment free.' p. 62.

In 'The Triumph of Truth,' Mr Bryan draws a vivid picture of that political state of a country, in which it is necessary to impose restrictions on the press, to prevent the diffusion of knowledge, and the operation of free principles. His muse here speaks with becoming indignation, and 'crowned oppressors,' and 'sceptred tyrants,' who use their power to perpetuate ignorance, and entail slavery, are treated with very little respect. Considering that the subject is not altogether of a poetical cast, the author has managed it with a good deal of address ; and if the flowers of poesy are less profusely scattered here, than in some other of his productions, this deficiency is in part at least atoned for, by the truly independent and patriotic spirit, which breathes through the whole poem.

We take pleasure in noticing the beautiful manner in which this volume is printed ; it is highly creditable to the Washington press, and we could wish to see it made an example for printers in that quarter, as well as in some others.



- 3.—1. *Collections of the New York Historical Society, for the Year 1826.* Vol. IV. pp. 308. Being a Continuation of Smith's History of New York by the same Author.
2. *History of the State of New York.* By JOSEPH W. MOULTON. *Part II. Novum Belgium.* New York. Bliss & White.

THERE is hardly such a thing, as a good history of any of the American Colonies before the Revolution. Those, which are respectable as narratives of events, are exceedingly deficient in the most important branches of history, philosophical and political research. Before the Revolution, indeed, no good history could be written, for events had not so far unfolded themselves, as to enable the historian to detect their bearings and relations towards the great issue of the independence of the colonies. Such a history might now be written, if all the materials could be collected ; but here again a serious difficulty arises. The best materials are in great part lost, except such as have been preserved in the office of Trade and Plantations, in London.